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Property Owners
Alliance*

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January 28, 2013

To: Members of the Assembly Judiciary Committee:
Chair, Assembly Member Bob Wieckowski
Assembly Member Donald Wagner
Assembly Member Luis Alejo
Assembly Member Ed Chau
Assembly Member Roger Dickinson
Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
Assembly Member Jeff Gorell
Assembly Member Brian Maisenschein
Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi
Assembly Member Mark Stone

From: Kerry Morrison, Executive Director
Hollywood Property Owners Alliance

Subject: Opposition to AB 5 (Ammiano) Homeless Bill of Rights

I am writing on behalf of the property owners along Hollywood Boulevard, who manage the Hollywood Entertainment District Business Improvement District (BID). Our nonprofit organization is the Hollywood Property Owners Alliance, and we represent hundreds of property owners along a one-mile stretch of Hollywood Boulevard.

The board voted at their January 17, 2013 board meeting to speak out in opposition to the bill proposed by Assembly member Tom Ammiano, known as the "Homeless Bill of Rights." Our BID has been in existence since 1996, and has played a significant role in the revitalization of downtown Hollywood, a neighborhood which had fallen into blight and despair after decades of abandonment.

There are four reasons why our non-profit board opposes this bill:

1. This bill rolls the clock back with respect to homeless policy. The public policy momentum today is focused on ending homelessness, not facilitating life in the public right of way.
2. The overly broad definition of "harassment" or enforcement creates a chilling effect on the ability of BID security to engage and encourage people to move off the streets, and to initiate private person's arrests when necessary.

3. The public right-of-way is to be enjoyed by all, without being subject to intimidation or lack of sanitary conditions. This legislation shifts the balance toward conditions that may impede business and render our business districts intimidating and uncomfortable for those who live, work, visit and go to school.

4. Had this legislation been codified in 2010, we would've been prohibited from helping dozens of people move from the streets into apartment units. Some of these individuals have been homeless on the streets of Hollywood for more than a decade, and others suffer from severe mental illness. Absent involvement of our BID officers with law enforcement and social service providers, many of these individuals would still be wandering the streets of Hollywood, or worse, may have passed away. This point is elaborated upon below.

Since 2007, our interactions with our homeless neighbors have become increasingly intentional and purpose-driven. About five years ago, inspired by the federal government's vision to end homelessness in America, our BID was involved in forming a grass-roots coalition committed to ending homelessness in Hollywood by 2018. This coalition, Hollywood 4WRD (which stands for "4 walls a roof and a door") has organized three homeless counts and one homeless registry, in which every individual was interviewed using the Vulnerability Index. Our BID security officers play a critical role in a team approach to moving individuals off the streets of Hollywood and into housing. Since the Homeless Registry was conducted in 2010, over 200 individuals have been housed.

Our BID officers know every homeless person in this neighborhood by name, and have built up trust over time to coax and encourage people to come in off the street. This bill creates a chilling effect on BID's by suggesting that the engagement initiated by a BID could be construed as "harassment."

We respectfully ask that you reject this legislation. What are the rights of our homeless neighbors? To *not be homeless*...and to look forward to assistance to help them secure the housing and services they require. Toward this end-game our collective efforts should be focused.

cc: Assemblymember Richard Bloom
State Senator Curren Price